

The licensing of the airwaves is a public responsibility. There's a public interest requirement as to whose owns those radio stations; the public owns these airwaves. The overriding interest is the public good, not the commercial well being of a few companies. There is no plausible case to make that this deregulation will be in the country's interest. I want more than two mostly identical choices for content on radio these days. Local ownership and limited ownership of a market would continue to prevent that from happening.

"If criticism is the best known antidote to error and the leaders naturally hate criticism...then clearly a society is best served by ensuring that leaders can not suppress or evade critical appraisal." David Brin

If those companies can own the majority of market in a particular area, how can this foster freedom of choice as an individual citizen or as a consumer? I do not watch the Internet while driving down the road in Texas but I do listen to the radio. Companies that depend on advertising dollars will never be as community oriented or innovative in program topic or quality as an independent. I already experience this first hand watching what cutting funding to PBC/PBS has done here in Houston. There are as many commercials as on the major networks and anything even remotely controversial gets pushed to after 10 pm. The attempt to deregulate will have the same effect on local radio.

As to local stations interfering with main station broadcasts, I already can't get KPFT due to buzzing interference about the third of the time when someone throws a switch. I have the same problem with KHOU occasionally too.

The principle on which your decision is based boils down to is this: do you support the right to freedom of speech (whether you agree or even like the content) on the airwaves at the grassroots level, or to promoting the interests of an elite minority who have money (and want to make more) to detriment of public that would form its own opinion?

This member of the American public wants you to vote to let me be free to choose what I want to listen to from among a selection of choices that represents my local community not just that of single national commercial broadcaster or two. I am more than a sheep-like consumer to be persuaded to part with my money or my diverse interests.

Deregulation of radio is not an effective representation of "free" for a physically limited natural resource. Free speech is not just about the freedom to make money.

Sincerely,  
Carole Plumb